

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For FPO use only

received

date entered

51

1. Name

historic Motter, John C. House (preferred)

and or common

2. Location

street & number 1005 Motter Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Frederick vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Maryland code 24 county Frederick code 021

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: rental housing

4. Owner of Property

name See Continuation Sheet #1

street & number

city, town Frederick vicinity of state Maryland 21701

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Frederick County Courthouse

street & number 101 North Calvert Street

city, town Frederick state Maryland 21701

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Maryland Historical Trust
title Historic Sites Survey

has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1982 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

F-3-59

dition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The John C. Motter House is a circa 1880, asymmetrical brick residence which stands on top of a slight rise overlooking a suburban development in the north end of Frederick, Maryland. The house is constructed in the Queen Anne style and is characterized on the exterior by a multi-gabled roof, vertical and horizontal timbering in the gable, decorative porches, projecting gables and bays, beveled facade corners, and ornate corbeled chimneys. Interior features include an asymmetrical floor plan with hexagonal room, original interior woodwork, marbelized slate mantels and decorative plaster ceiling medallions. The house is an unusually ornate version of the Queen Anne style of architecture for rural Frederick County. Documentary records indicate that a building existed on this site in the 1840's and suggest that this was incorporated in the existing 1880s building; however, there is no visible evidence remaining of the earlier 1840s residence on the interior or exterior of the building. Two garage buildings unrelated to the house are located to the rear of the property.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The John C. Motter House is a single detached 2½ and 3½ story multi-gabled asymmetrical shaped brick residence laid in a common bond pattern located at 1005 Motter Avenue in the north end of the incorporated limits of the city of Frederick, Maryland.

The building, which when first built was surrounded by open cultivated farmland, now stands on the edge of a 1950s and 1960s suburban residential development and the Hood College open pasture land. Located to the north of the building is a 1950s elementary school; to the immediate rear (west) is an unrelated one story cinder block garage building; to the south is a macadam entrance drive and cinder block residence, and to the east beyond Motter Avenue is a city park and community center brick building.

The John C. Motter House comprises three integrated sections, north front section, south front section and rear section located west of the main block. The entire building is set on a low random limestone foundation with scored cement watertable and is covered by hipped and gable slate roofs, part of which has been covered by sheets of asphalt. The roof of the house is dominated by decorative colored patterned slate work on the front of the building and tall ornate chimneys with buttressed sides and corners flared at the top by a deep row of corbeling.

The most prominent section of the house is the north front section which is 3½ stories in height and three bays wide, one bay in depth with a ½ bay rear extension. A two story bay with paneled aprons, 1/1 windows, scrolled brackets, dentiled frieze and a row of circular motifs just below the apron, three bays wide, extends from the first bay from the south corner on the second and third levels. A one story hip roof wooden porch supported by four turned columns and a frieze with turned spindles extends across the entire front of the south front section. A tall, narrow

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Motter, John C. House

1005 Motter Avenue, Frederick

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OWNERS OF PROPERTY

Nelson Zahler
8116 Overlook Drive
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Richard Holtz
7906 Clearfield Road
Frederick, Maryland 21701

GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Continued)

floor to ceiling 2/1 window is located in the first bay on the east side of the south front section on the first level. The main entrance, twin seven panel doors, with a two light transom, enclosed by fluted pilasters headed by molded brackets and an overhanging cornice decorated with sawtooth and garland decoration is located in the second bay on the front level.

All four corners of this front south section are angled until just below the roofline where the brick is corbeled out to meet the plain boxed cornice. The side and front gable ends are covered with slate and decorated by a plain boxed cornice with return, dentil and jigsaw molding and a arched 2/2 window centered in the gable. Double hung 2/1 windows are located throughout the remaining portions of the house except where noted.

The north front section of the house is 2½ stories high, two bays wide and three bays deep with the side gable facing the front (east) side of the building. A large three window wide bay with paneled apron, plain frieze, brick foundation and 2/1 windows extends across the entire first level of the front gable end.

The front gable is decorated by half timbering in a vertical and horizontal design inset in the brick around a square 2/1 window. The closed gable end is decorated by a plain barge board.

A two bay wide hip roofed wood porch with turned columns and turned spindled frieze is centered across the north side of the north front addition. Two, floor to ceiling, tall, narrow, 2/1 windows are sheltered by a porch on the first level. Two 2/1 windows are located on the second level above the porch.

The rear section of the Motter House is three bays deep and two bays wide, and two stories high. The rear section is covered by a hipped slate roof with boxed cornice enclosing the gutters and decorated by a dentiled frieze.

The south side of the rear section is decorated by a three bay wide two story open wooden porch which extends along the entire south side of the rear section. The porch is supported by six massive turned columns, with four columns in relief, and is decorated by the original spindled frieze on the first level and turned balustraded railing on the second level. The porch is covered by a composite roof with an unusual kick at the eave.

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Continued)

All windows on the rear section are double hung 2/1 with jack arches; louvered exterior shutters originally covered the windows but have been removed. A modern entrance for a rear stairway leading to the second level of the rear section was placed between the first and second bays from the front section on the north side of the first level, in the 1950s when the building was converted to apartment use. The entrance is covered by a plain shed roofed wood entrance porch with wooden steps.

The main rear entrance, which has been altered with a modern door, is located in the first bay from the west side on the south wall.

The interior of the John C. Motter House is characterized by an irregular asymmetrical floor plan of hall/double parlor with rear end extension. The front twin seven panel doors open into a hall lit by the two light transoms, which extends to the rear section of the house, broken by a slight diagonal turn to the south which once accommodated the main stairway. The original stairway which rose from the hall to the second level was removed during the period that the single family residence was converted to apartments. Original four panel doors with original beaded and rounded Victorian surrounds with symmetrical circular corner blocks open off the hallway, two to the north and two to the south. An original circular plaster medallion decorates the middle of the hall ceiling.

The main parlor lies to the north of the hallway and is actually two rooms separated in the middle by two large original nine panel pocket doors. Original louvered interior shutters are located at all the windows in these two rooms. A recessed paneled apron with architrave molding is located below the windows in the bay in the front parlor. Centered on the north wall of the front parlor room is the most ornate mantelpiece in the house, a slate mantel grained to resemble dark colored marble with semicircular opening flanked by ornate support columns fluted at the top and tapered at the base in a characteristic Victorian urn shape decorated by recessed gold line decoration. All window surrounds and baseboards remain intact in both of these rooms.

Crossing the hall to the south side is located a small room well lit by three windows with baseboard, window surrounds and interior shutters remaining intact. A small bathroom has been inserted in a small space leading from the front room to the rear hexagonal room which originally contained a door to the outside on the south wall.

Because of its unusual shape, which is reproduced on the second level, the hexagonal room is one of the most significant rooms in the house. In addition to the original baseboards, window and door surrounds, four panel doors with transoms; the room is decorated by an unusually large oval shaped plaster medallion with fruit motifs and a marbelized slate mantelpiece located on the south wall. A modern door, probably added later, leads to the outside on the west wall.

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION (Continued)

A modern bathroom is located on the north side of the hall to the rear of the front rooms, to the west of which are the original interior cellar stairs.

Comprising the entire floor space of the rear section is a modern kitchen with unusual peaked hood moldings over the interior windows. A simple wood mantel piece is located on the west wall. The base of the breast of the mantel follows closely the inverted peaked molding over the windows.

The second floor replicates that of the first floor with two bed chambers in positions corresponding to the parlors. The door surrounds, window surrounds, four panel doors with transoms, and baseboards are identical to those used on the first level. Three mantels are located on the second level in identical locations as the first level with the exception of a mantel located on the west wall in the north rear room which is separated from the front room by a wall rather than pocket doors.

All mantels are marbelized slate of simple design with arched openings flanked by decorate arched panels which follow the curve of the opening and are decorated by painted recessed gold lines.

The bathroom, located on the second level above that on the first level, retains its original colorful and detailed geometrical tile floor.

Three small rooms are located on the third level in the north and south front section, now reached by an exterior fire escape but once reachable through a remaining small narrow closed stairway.

The rear section second floor is presently reached through a center closed narrow stairway which rises from the center of the north side of the building. Originally, the two rear apartments were one room reached by the second floor hallway. Only the front rear section apartment may be reached from the front hall. A large modern steel fire escape rises to the third level on the south.

The substantial changes and redecorating completed by John C. Motter in 1882 erased most, if not all of the original 1840 fabric of the house unless the simple peaked moldings found in the kitchen were retained from the earlier period. Visible inspection of the foundations, attics and exterior walls revealed no changes from an earlier period.

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	1882	Builder/Architect	unknown
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Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Applicable Criteria: B and C

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The significance of the John C. Motter House is derived from two sources. First, the house is an unusual example, for the rural sections of Maryland, of a Queen Anne influenced residence of the late nineteenth century. Although the Queen Anne style was popular in the late nineteenth century throughout the United States, the popularity in western Maryland was limited primarily to urban settings (village or a town). Rural domestic buildings generally continued to be constructed in a simple vernacular form. Of the rural examples of Queen Anne houses that do exist in this region, the John C. Motter House is unique because of the verticality of the structure and the beveled facade corners of the main block. The Queen Anne features which characterize the house are the asymmetrical arrangement of parts, half-timbering in the gable ends, projecting bays, and decorated brick chimneys. Combined with these features are characteristics of an earlier house form popular in the area, a cross-gable rectangular structure. This combination may be the result of undocumented remodelings. The second source of significance is through association with John C. Motter (1844-1916) who lived in the house from the 1880s until 1914. Motter, a lawyer, was judge of the Maryland Sixth Judicial Circuit Court and served as president of the Emmitsburg Railroad Company, and on the boards of the Washington, Frederick and Gettysburg Railway Company and the Citizens National Bank while in residence at this house.

HISTORY AND SUPPORT

The land and site of the existing John C. Motter House was originally the small farm of Ezra Staley who combined 2 parcels of land in 1840 to comprise a 42 3/4 acre farm.¹ Ezra Staley died intestate in 1881 leaving a wife and six children. According to a description in the court records of Staley's estate, the original house was two story, with nine rooms, surrounded by six fields of hay, corn and wheat, fruit orchards, a post and rail fence, a large new bank barn, ice house and dairy.² The house stood on the west side of what was then the Oppossuntown Pike Toll Road according to the 1858 Bond Map of Frederick County. The Staley House and farm, which according to the family's testimony in the court records was too small to subdivide was ordered to be sold at public auction at the City Hotel in Frederick on November 5, 1881 and was purchased by John C. Motter for \$8464.50.³

In 1882, soon after it was purchased, Motter completely rebuilt and decorated the house in true Victorian style as was recorded in his biographical account written in T. J. C. Williams' History of Frederick County in 1906, "It is noteworthy that some years ago Judge Motter purchased a most attractive property on the outskirts of Frederick along the Frederick and Oppossuntown Turnpike where he fitted up a charming home that is provided with every modern comfort and which

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HISTORY AND SUPPORT (Continued)

is typical of the fullest refinement."⁴ There is no record of any architect or specific builder which was used in the 1832 changes to the building, but the exterior wood trim, timbering in the gable, ornate corbeled chimneys and brick corbeling under the eaves are not typical of the work of other local builders during the period in Frederick County suggesting that Motter may have used a Baltimore or other out of town architect.

In 1832, the same year he began rebuilding the house, John Columbus Motter (1844-1916), an Emmitsburg, Maryland native, was nominated as the associate justice of the sixth judicial court having served as Maryland State's Attorney from 1875 and as counsel to the Frederick County Commissioners in 1872. Motter was also President of the Emmitsburg Railroad Company, a director of the Washington Frederick and Gettysburg Railway Company and a director of the Citizen's National Bank. Motter married Effie Buhrman Marker and had nine children, seven of which survived childhood.⁵

On April 27, 1914, after having spent thirty three years in the house, John C. Motter sold the property to Lee J. McCartney of Craig County, Virginia conveying with it "the landlords share of half of the wheat, corn, hay and potatoes now on the farm premises and also all the hanging lamps, the kitchen range and boiler, the bath tub, washstand and closet now in the bathroom . . ."⁶

Over the next forty years the house was sold six times,⁷ finally being converted into an eight unit apartment house in the 1950s, which it remains today. Although subjected to this hard use, the building has remained in good condition and changed little.

Set on top of a small rise overlooking the surrounding 1950s and 1960s suburban neighborhood on a road now named after its famous owner, the Judge John Columbus Motter House is a significant local landmark visible in many directions in the north part of the City of Frederick.

Footnotes

1. Frederick County Equity Records Case #4681, Liber AF 3, Folios 312-328.
2. Ibid., Folio 325.
3. Ibid.
4. Williams, T. J. C. History of Frederick County, Volume II, p. 816, L.R. Titsworth and Company, 1910.
5. Ibid.
6. Frederick County Land Records, Liber 310, Folio 177.
7. Ibid., Liber 320, Folio 467, Liber 336, Folio 526, Liber 348, Folio 479, Liber 354, Folio 345, Liber 407, Folio 192, Liber 474, Folio 45

9. Major Bibliographical References

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Frederick County Land Records 1840-1982

Frederick County Equity Records, Frederick County Courthouse, Frederick, Maryland
Williams, T.J.C., History of Frederick County, Maryland. Baltimore, Md.: L.R. Tittsworth
and Company, 1910.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre (34,438 sq.ft.)

Quadrangle name Frederick

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	8	2	9	12	5	2	0	4	3	6	6	7	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the John C. Motter House is shown on the attached map labeled "Boundary Map". The nominated property includes only the lot upon which the resource stands.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
N/A			

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cherilyn Widell

organization _____ date May 28, 1982

street & number 115 East Third Street telephone (301) 663-6820

city or town Frederick state Maryland 21701

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

J. Mitth

10-28-82

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

date

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

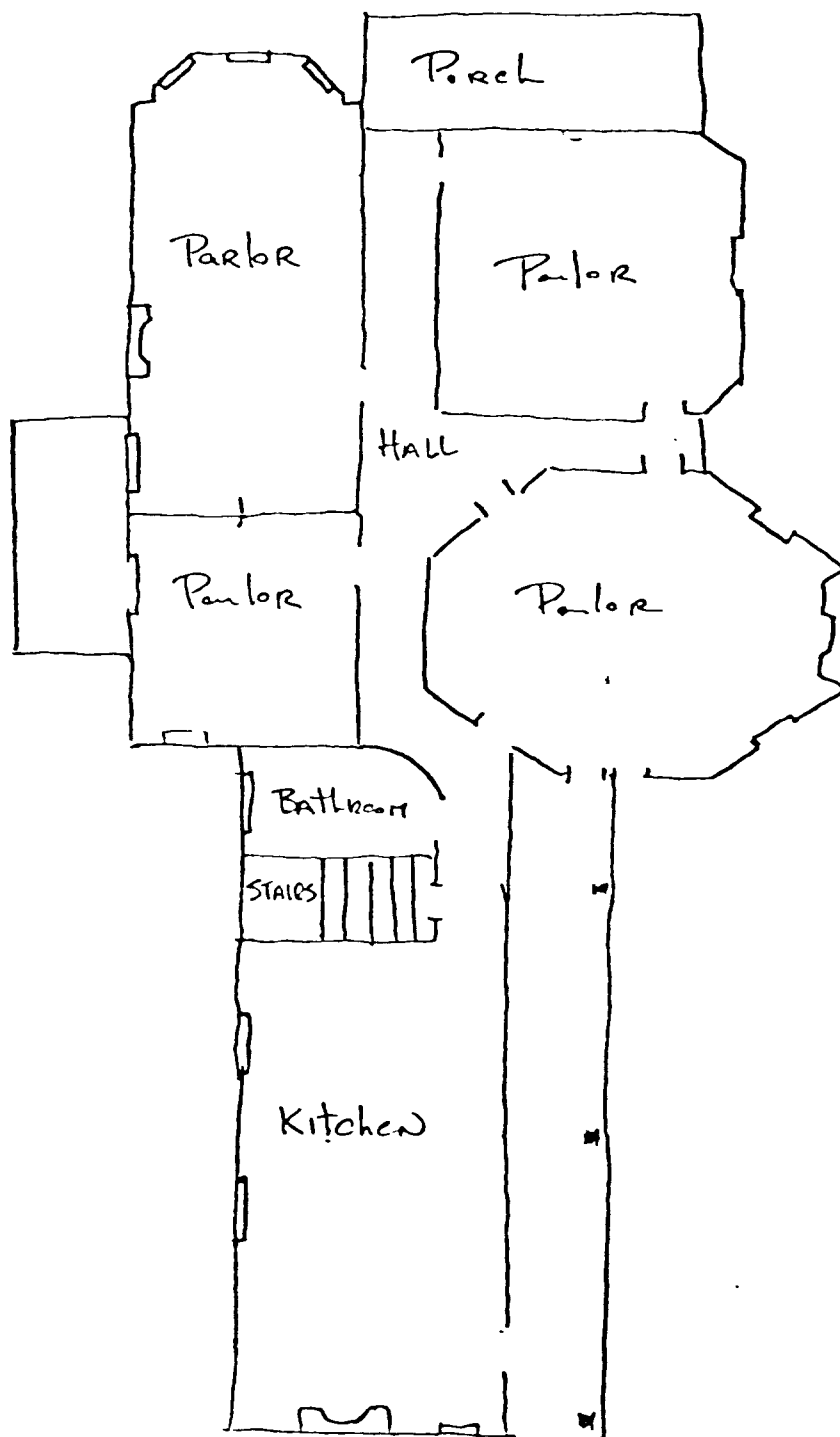
date

Chief of Registration

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John C. Motter House
FREDERICK, MARYLAND

← N
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

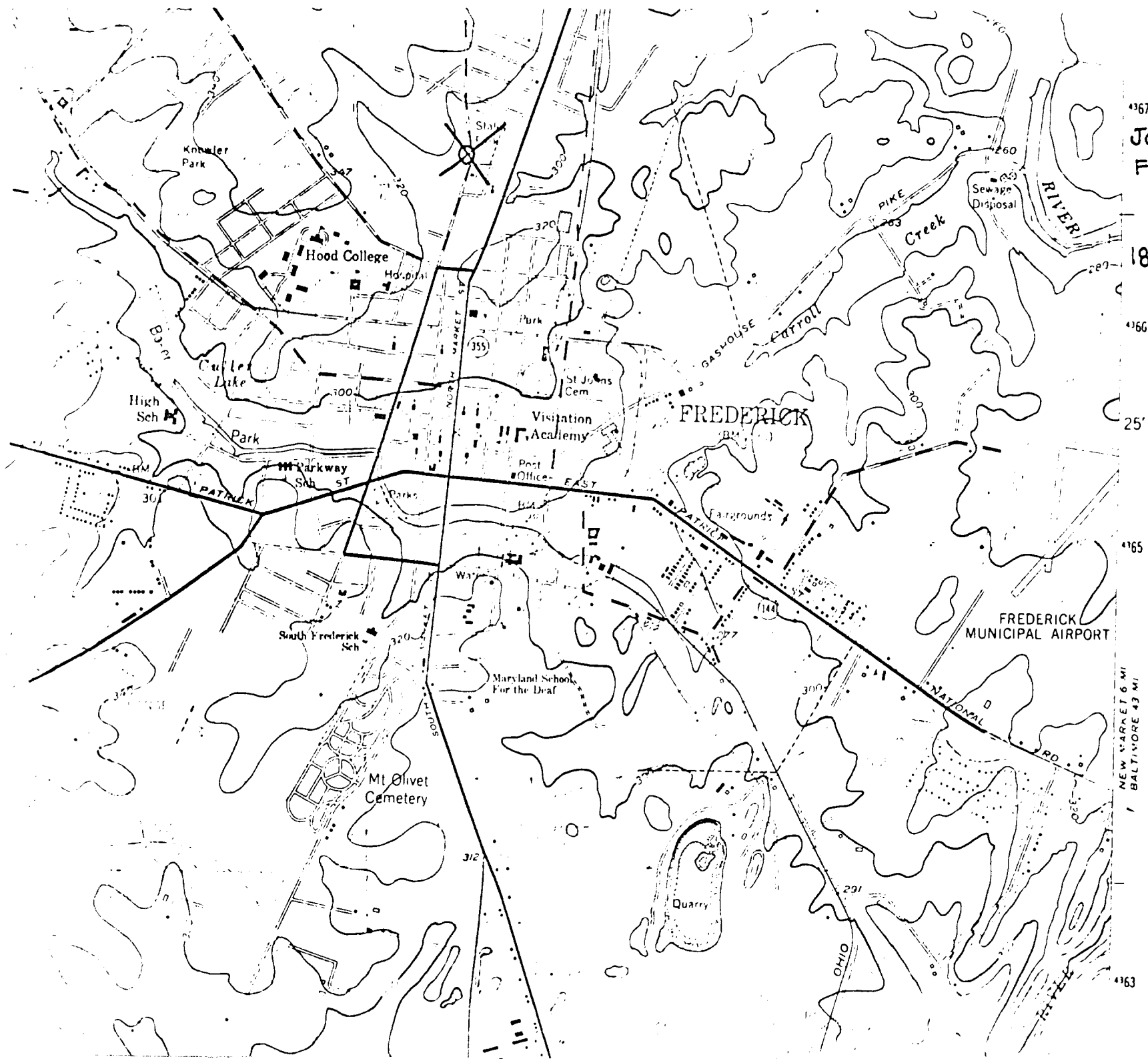


1" = Approx 10 Feet

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AN





4367
JOHN C. MOTTER HOUSE
FREDERICK, MD

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